Ivriz Cultural Landscape

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Description

The Ivriz Cultural Landscape includes in situ two large Neo-Hittite rock reliefs, and a small Neo-Hittite altar, as well as a monastery dating to the Middle Byzantine Period, two caves and natural features such as springs. The site was used as a frontier marker, and as a religious and cultic area over a long span of time from the Late Bronze Age (1650-1200 BC), through Iron Age (1200-650 BC) and down to the Middle - Late Byzantine period (843-1543 AD). Mentioned as DKASKAL.KUR in the Late Bronze Age by the Hittites, it was an important frontier marker and later in the Iron Age it became an important water cult sanctuary and this continued into the Byzantine Period where the site was used again as a religious setting for an important monastery.

Ivriz village is located 170 km south-east of the city of Konya, 2.9 km south of the provincial town of Halkapınar. The village is settled on the slopes of the Mount Bolkar, which is the middle part of the Taurus Mountain range. The village is also placed in the south-east of the Konya plain, and right next to the wetlands and the streams created by the Ivriz Creek.

Ivriz village represents all the elements of an integrated landscape, including springs, nature and an active rural life style which is important for continuing socio-cultural heritage. Ivriz village, with unique examples of civil architecture of mud brick structures has continued its rural character.

The village has retained a special atmosphere in all seasons due to its rich landscape and water resources. In the village, water springs bubble up from the carstic structure of the ground. Still today, the water flows around May until August, which seems like a natural miracle to the visitors. The amount of the water and energy of the springs depends on the yearly snowfall and snowmelt in the Taurus Mountains. The springs were also recognized by the Hittites, who refer to it as DKASKAL.KUR in relation to the Mountain Sarlaimmi (Bolkar Mountains) in a treaty which is describing the frontiers of Hatti and Tarhuntassa.

In the 8th century BC a local king of a Neo-Hittite kingdom (Warpalawas of Tuwanuwa) carved a rock relief and erected several inscribed steles in Luwian hieroglyphic script and a sculpture of himself next to these springs. The Neo-Hittite rock relief of the 8th century BC is also known as the Ivriz rock relief.

The relief is approximately 4.2 m. tall and 2.40 m. wide, and carved on a hillside of one of the rock outcrops. It depicts Warpalawas, king of Tuwanuwa, together with the Luwian weather god Tarhunzas, which can be identified through the inscriptions on the relief. The relief has three inscriptions. One in front of the head of the weather god, one behind the king and one down at the bottom located in a small cavity, where a dedication of the artist is written. In the centre of the relief, the weather god, who holds a wheat bundle with his left hand and grapes with the other, is demonstrated. He carries also grapes and grape leaves on his belt, symbolizing the fertility of the valley. Behind him is the branch of a grape plant. Tarhunzas has a beard and curly hair. He wears a helmet with horns, which is the typical symbol for Hittite deities. His hair and beard are depicted in the Assyrian or Aramaean style. Warpalawas is standing in front of Tarhunzas, he is depicted smaller than the deity and is holding both of his hands up. He wears a round decorated hat and a long embroidered robe which is attached with a fibula. His hair and beard are made in the same style as the deity. Originally there was a spring in front of this relief; however, today the water of this area is collected through basins and channels of the Ivriz water dam.

Around 200 m east of the relief, a rectangular basin is carved into the rock with steps leading down to it. Below this basin was a small rock relief of a Hittite officer, who is taking a ram or sheep (?) to the basin - the altar - to be sacrificed. In front of the officer, was a second person, where only the edge of the skirt is preserved. Because of serious damages, this relief was removed and was transported to the Ereğli Museum. Around 50 m south of this small altar is a water cave, where the water bubbles from the ground during a certain period every year. Local

people still get their drinking water from here. In the close vicinity of the relief three stele fragments with Luwian inscription, a part of a colossal sculpture of a king and the lower part of a stele with a bilingual (Phoenician and Luwian) inscription and the depiction of the lower part of the weather god were discovered. These are all indicators that this was not only a frontier marker but also a water sanctuary.

A second Neo-Hittite rock relief is located on a rock outcrop 7 km south of Ivriz Village in a dried out river bed in a narrow valley of the Taurus Mountains. This location is also known as Ambarderesi. Across this rock relief is a Byzantine Monastery, the Sannabadae Monastery (known locally also as Kızlar Oğlanlar Sarayı, Palace of Girls and Boys). The monastery complex extends on both sides of the narrow valley. During the Konya Ereğli Survey Project (KEYAR), this area was surveyed by Assist. Prof. Çiğdem Maner (Koç University). In 2015, a fragment of an inscribed stele with Luwian hieroglyphs was found in the vicinity, which is very important, because it indicated that inscribed steles were also located in front of the relief in Ambarderesi, and that this is part of a large water sanctuary.

The iconography of the relief in Ambarderesi is very similar to the Ivriz Relief, however compared to the Ivriz relief it has been exposed to much severe weather conditions. In addition to symbolism of manifestation of power and cult, this iconography is also a symbol of fertility. The Halkapınar and Ereğli region are still famous for their grapes today.

The Hittites carved reliefs at important gateways and on roads, which connected districts with each other. It can be inferred from the site's being mentioned in the Hittite treaty that, it had been an important frontier marker and a religious centre already then.

The picture program of the reliefs follows the tradition of the Hittites, which depicted the king with the deity accompanied with inscriptions. This form of depiction is generally accepted as a symbol and manifestation of power of the king through the gods. The picture program of the two Neo-Hittite reliefs is almost identical, the major difference is that the relief in Ambarderesi does not have inscriptions. Since the iconography of Warpalawas and Tarhunzas resembles that on the main relief, it can be assumed that this relief dates to the same time period.

Justification of Outstanding Universal Value

The Cultural Landscape of Ivriz is an outstanding and a unique example of the exhibition of essential interchanges of human values from the Iron Age until the Byzantine Period. The reliefs are unique in their iconography, inscriptions, the applications of technologies and tools.

Hittite cuneiform texts state that water was seen as a purifying and sacred element. The sacred character was intensified through the cult given to the river and spring goddesses. Deities were usually associated with mountain and river gods, this association is also demonstrated through the rock reliefs, which are mainly located next to a water source. This cultic notion and activity of carving rock reliefs next to water sources also continues after the collapse of the Hittite Empire and is taken as a cultural memory into the newly established Neo Hittite Kingdoms of the Iron Age and later into the Byzantine period.

The relief depicts King Warpalawas in prayer gesture in front of the Luwian weather god Tarhunzas. Tarhunzas symbolizes the fertility of the region with his grapes and wheat bundles. The inscriptions behind the king and on top of the god identify the actors as King Warpalawas, King of Tuwanuwa and the Luwian weather god Tarhunzas. The iconography symbolises the manifestation of power, and also the power of having carved rock reliefs on high rock outcrops. The fresco in one of the chapels of the Byzantine monastery depicts saints, which indicates that the manifestation through religion in this place continues.

The peculiarity about Ivriz Cultural Landscape is that it involves also the natural environment, the natural water springs as part of the sanctuary, as it was also during the Iron Age until the Byzantine period.

Criterion (ii): The Ivriz Cultural Landscape shows an important interchange over a span of time on developments in monumental arts and landscape design. The use of the same space and integration of water, mountains and nature during Neo-Hittite and later during Late Antiquity and Byzantine period testify to these important interchanges. Interchanges are also reflected in the art. The Sannabadae Monastery with its chapel, which is decorated with fresco paintings, depicts a scene with saints. On one side the Luwian weather god Tarhunzas and on the other saints are depicted. This attests the continuation of this space as a religious setting during a long span of time.

Criterion (iii): The reliefs of Ivriz and Ambaderesi bear unique testimony to a major cultic monument of the Neo-Hittite period (c. 1180-700 BC). After the collapse of the Hittite Empire, either already existing settlements in the

south and southeast of Anatolia were enlarged or new settlements were established. The tradition of carving rocks with royalties and gods with accompanying inscriptions continued and was part of the cultural memory from the Hittite Empire. Ivriz is the only known and preserved water sanctuary of the Neo-Hittite period. The integration of water, landscape, religious concepts and art are the most important features of the site. The Sannabadae Monastery is attesting the importance of the setting and testifies that the cultural memory of this place was carried to the Byzantine period.

Criterion (iv): Ivriz Cultural Landscape is an outstanding example of a technological ensemble. The Neo-Hittite reliefs (Ivriz and Ambarderesi) are a couple of metres above the ground (the original height from the ground is not known, as it is partially filled with pebbles from the rivers now), and carving images on high hillsides during the 8th century BC symbolises for artistic engagement, expertise and power. The artist had to reach the hillside, flatten it with tools. After the flattening process the relief was carved precisely which needed expertise, technological peculiarities such as the usage of certain tools (i.e. chisels). To carve reliefs on high hillsides is not only a symbol of cult but also a symbol of the power of the king. It is the manifestation of the king through art, cult and religion.

Statements of authenticity and/or integrity

Authenticity

The relief in Ivriz and also the smaller relief in Ambarderesi and the Byzantine Monastery are under protection by the Turkish Legislation for Preservation of Cultural and Natural Property, Law. No. 2863.

The Ivriz Neo-Hittite Rock Relief was registered as cultural property to be preserved by the statement of Superior Council of Immovable Antiquties and Monuments, dated 19.06.1981, numbered A-2953.

The surrounding area of the Ivriz Rock Relief was registered as an archaeological-natural conservation site by the Konya Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural and Natural Heritage dated 27.10.1993 and numbered 1818.

The smaller rock relief in Ambarderesi, the Byzantine (Sannabadae) Monastery and the castle were registered as cultural properties to be preserved and the borders of the area registered as the 1st degree archaeological site by Konya Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural and Natural

Heritage dated 21.05.1999 and numbered 3514. In 2014, borders of the protected site were revised by the same Council.

The village of Ivriz in its agricultural landscape, archaeological, historical, architectural and sociocultural values provide an overall perception of a strong authenticity. The village has retained a special atmosphere in all seasons due to rich landscape and water resources. The village pattern, the continuing rural life style, the local community's presence, the local materials and techniques on traditional buildings and monuments as well as its natural landscape convey the features of different periods (Late Bronze Age, Iron Age, Late Antiquity, Byzantine Period) which has to some extent been preserved right down until today. Therefore, Ivriz and the neighbouring villages, as an integrated whole for the rural network illustrate the rural traditions of the Halkapınar district.

A landscaping project and a project for sustainable tourism was started in spring 2016. The landscape project, which is financially supported by the local development agency (KOP) will create a visitor center, info stand, entrance, counters for locals to sell their products and an education center for school children, where also documentaries will be shown. The new arrangement around the monument aims to emphasise the monument without harming its values, authenticity and integrity.

Integrity

The villages in the area such as Yeşilyurt, Yassıkaya, Delimahmutlu, Osmanköseli, Kayasaray, Seydifakıllı, Eskihisar and Yayıklı represent a strong network system of agricultural resources and production in the area, as well as a connection of water resources, historic mills and industrial heritage. Ivriz village is part of this rural network which represents the integrated landscape, springs, nature and an active rural life style which is important for continuing socio-cultural heritage. Some of these other villages in the area also have continuing rural life style with good examples of mud brick and stone civil architecture which makes the whole of the rural context stronger.

Ivriz village, with unique examples of civil architecture of mud brick buildings has sustained its rural character. The setting of this village contributes to the understanding of the ancient landscape and agricultural production contributing to the sustenance of the locals. The lack of finances of the local community to restore their houses

has been somehow a positive aspect in conserving the traditional features of the buildings. However some are in danger of destruction.

Some of the houses have partially suffered destructions over time and some of the interiors have undergone light repairs with the efforts of local residents to fit in crucial requirements such as internal bathrooms and kitchens. However the general integrity of the buildings and their surroundings as well as rural traditions has been sustained.

For the protection of the integrity and authenticity of the village and its surroundings, the continuity of the local community's presence is a crucial issue. The protection of the Ivriz and Ambardere reliefs, the Byzantine monastery and local resources are important for the sustainability of past and current traditions. Furthermore continuity of local agricultural economy with alternative sustainable solutions is required in order to prevent the intense commercialisation in the area.

Comparison with other similar properties

The main rock relief in Ivriz was initiated by King Warpalawas as the inscription indicates. Since he is also mentioned in Neo Assyrian sources (as Urballa) his reign is set in the time frame of ca. 730-710 BC. The iconography of the relief in Ambarderesi, which doesn't bear an inscription, is almost identical with the Ivriz relief and it can reasonably be inferred that the relief in Ambarderesi dates also to the time period of King Warpalawas.

Ivriz is the only open air water cult sanctuary of the Iron Age, where the natural habitat is still preserved. The fact that the water bubbles from the ground in certain months during the year, the natural setting, the landscape and the water caves give an idea of how it once has been. The Hittites referred to places like such as DKASKAL.KUR, and it can be inferred that Ivriz is the DKASKAL.KUR, which is mentioned on the Bronze tablet, which was found in the capital of the Hittite Empire Hattusha, located in Boğazköy. DKASKAL.KUR is mentioned in relation to the Mountain Sarlaimmi, which was located by scholars at the Bolkar Mountain, above Ivriz.

In fact there is no real comparison for the Neo-Hittite water sanctuary at Ivriz and also for the Ivriz Cultural Landscape, as both are unique. During the Late Bronze Age the Hittites set up water pools, as a symbol of apotheosis. The pools at Eflatun Pınar (on the UNESCO Tentative List since 2014), Yalburt and Köyotlu are artificially built water pool complexes, not open air sanctuaries like Ivriz. Also these pool complexes date to the Late Bronze Age, probably around the second half of the 13th century BC., so they are around 400 years older than Ivriz.

During the Iron Age it seems that the tradition of erecting artificial water pools was abandoned. The so-called Tigris Tunnel in Bırkleyn is more of a political manifestation of Neo-Assyrian kings on the Dibni Creek. During the expansion to Northern Mesopotamia, the Neo-Assyrians carved inscriptions and depictions of their kings on the walls of the so-called Tigris Tunnel located in Bırkleyn, Diyarbakır. The oldest inscription (No. 1) dates to the reign of Tiglathpileser I (c. 1114-1076 BC). Bırkleyn was taken as the source of the Tigris by the Neo Assyrian kings, where they commemorated their kings. However, this is not a water sanctuary as Ivriz, but rather a manifestation of power through depictions and inscriptions which say that the Neo-Assyrian king is controlling the water source.

Another example of a Byzantine religious monument being built in front or close to of a Hittite rock relief is known from Kızıldağı Mahaleç Tepe (also known as Mihaliç, which is deriving from Michael), where a Byzantine church and settlement is found close to the famous Kızıldağ relief and inscription.The Sannabadae monastery is just built across the relief in Ambarderesi, which is not coincidence.The historical and cultural memory of the Hittites continued into the Byzantine period.